

Secret of Spiritual Ministry

by Stephen Kaung

The secret to spiritual ministry is brokenness, being willing to be broken for the sake of ministry, allowing the glory of God to shine forth through us.

Duration: 55:12

Scripture: Exodus 34:29-30, Romans 8:13, 2 Corinthians 4:1, 2 Corinthians 4:3-7

Topics: "Spiritual Leadership"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of ministry for the sake of Jesus and not for personal gain. They reference the story of Gideon and the 300, who broke their pitchers to let their torches shine and blew trumpets to achieve victory. The speaker also mentions the story of Jesus feeding 5,000 with five loaves and two fishes, highlighting the power of God to multiply and provide. The main message is that ministry involves imparting Christ to others, and the key to effective ministry is brokenness, where our fleshly desires are consumed and we become vessels for God's work.

Transcript

Turn to 2nd Corinthians chapter 4. 2nd Corinthians chapter 4. We'll read the whole chapter. 2nd Corinthians chapter 4, verse 1. Therefore, having this ministry, as we have had mercy shown us, we faint not. But we have rejected the hidden things of shame, not walking in deceit nor falsifying the word of God, but by manifestation of the truth, commanding ourselves to every conscience of man before God.

But if also our gospel is veiled, it is veiled in those that are lost, in whom the God of this world has blinded the thoughts of the unbelieving, so that the radiancy of the glad tidings of the glory of the Christ, who is the image of God, should not shine forth for them. For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus Lord, and ourselves your bondmen for Jesus' sake. Because it is the God who spoke that out of darkness light should shine, who has shown in our hearts for the shining forth of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassingness of the power may be of God and not from us. Every way afflicted, but not straightened. Seeing no apparent issue, but our way not entirely shut up.

Persecuted, but not abandoned. Cast down, but not destroyed. Always bearing about in a body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body.

For we who live are always delivered unto death on account of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So that death works in us, but life in you. And having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, I have believed, therefore have I spoken.

We also believe, therefore also we speak. Knowing that He who has raised the Lord Jesus shall raise us also with Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the grace abounding through the many may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

Therefore we faith not. But if indeed our outward man is consumed, yet the inward is renewed day by day. For our momentary and light affliction works for us in surpassing measure an eternal weight of glory.

While we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen. For the things that are seen are for a time, but those that are not seen, eternal. We mentioned before that the second letter to the Corinthians is almost like Paul's autobiography.

We see in this book Paul, a man in Christ. And this man in Christ is characterized in every way by spirituality. We mentioned before what is spiritual life.

And we are now considering together on this matter of spiritual ministry. Last time we mentioned that the first ingredient of spiritual ministry, or the nature of spiritual ministry, is writing the letter of Christ. As we minister to one another, as we minister to the body of Christ, according to the gift and grace that God has given to each, we are actually writing the letter of Christ.

Word by word, phrase by phrase, clause by clause, sentence by sentence, we are spelling out Christ. We are writing Christ in the lives of those whom we minister to. Even though we may be used of God to write that letter, and yet the letter is Christ, not us.

It is the impartation of Christ. True ministry is imparting Christ to other people. It is a ministry of the new covenant, not of letter, but of Spirit.

Not with ink, but with the power of the Holy Spirit. It is a ministry of life, a ministry of righteousness, a ministry of the Spirit. And if we really know what spiritual ministry is, probably we will faint under it.

Why? Because who is competent? Who is able to impart Christ to other people? Who is able to write Christ in the lives of other people? And yet, Paul said, having this ministry, we faint not. Naturally speaking, we will all faint under such a ministry, and yet because mercy has shown us, therefore we faint not. Instead of fainting under the seriousness and the greatness of spiritual ministry, we rise up in grace to fulfill that ministry which God has called us into.

By the grace of God, we respond to this call of ministry by offering ourselves to Him, that we may be suitable, usable, and available vessels of this ministry. You remember, Paul said, if the gospel is veiled, it is not because of us. It is because of the unbelieving, whose eyes are blinded by the God of this world.

Now, this ministry is the gospel of Jesus Christ. This ministry is the radiancy of Jesus Christ. This ministry is the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Now, this is the ministry. God has shown into our hearts. He has deposited in us Christ Jesus, who is life and who is light.

Therefore, we have this light in us. We have this Christ in us. We have this light in us.

We have this gospel in us, and we ought to be able to impart Christ to other people. We ought to be able to shine forth the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. There should not be anything within us that veils or hides the light, the light of Christ in us.

And so far as Paul is concerned, he said, he has put away everything of shame, hidden things, everything that may hinder the shining forth of the gospel of Jesus Christ, that it may not be veiled on his part. If anything is veiled, it is not because of him. Because so far as he is concerned, he has laid aside all the obstacles.

He is open, transparent, so that the light may shine forth through him without any obstruction. And dear brothers and sisters, if this is true of Paul, it ought to be true of us. We have this ministry.

We have this gospel. We have Christ in us. We have his life, which is the light of man.

And we ought to be able to shine forth Christ, to minister Christ to other people. There shouldn't be anything that will veil the gospel from coming forth. We ought to be open and transparent, that Christ may not be hindered in any way.

But are we so? Now you remember Paul mentioned this matter of the veil in the third chapter. He mentioned how Moses put a veil upon his face, so that the children of Israel will not be able to see the end of him who is passing away. Now if you go back to Exodus 34, you will find that Moses, when he went up to the mountain the second time, spent forty days and forty nights in the presence of God to receive the two tables of law.

When he came down the second time with the two tables of law and spoke to the children of Israel, he didn't know that his face, the sting of his face shone. He didn't know that, because he was with the Lord. So his face shone.

And the children of Israel dare not look at his face. So he put a veil upon his face. But whenever he went to the presence of the Lord, he took that veil away.

Now this is the history you find in Exodus 34. But in second Corinthians chapter three, the Spirit of God said, Moses put a veil upon his face, that the children of Israel will not be able to see the end of him that is annulled. In other words, on the one hand the children of Israel dare not look at his face, because his face shone.

They dare not look at the glory of God that is being shined forth through Moses. But at the same time, so far as Moses was concerned, he was passing away. So the veil was put upon his face, that the people will not be able to see the end of that which is annulled.

Then the Holy Spirit applied it in a different way. Instead of the veil upon Moses' face, you find the Spirit of God says, whenever the children of Israel read the book of Moses, they had the veil upon their hearts. Now the veil is not on Moses' face now.

The veil is upon the heart of the children of Israel when they read Moses. Now what does that mean? It means that they cannot understand the law. They have a veil upon their heart.

Though they read Moses, the book of the law, and yet they could not understand the meaning of the law. They misunderstood the law completely. They thought that the law was for them to keep, and by keeping

the law they could live.

They didn't know that the law gave them the knowledge of sin. The law is a schoolmaster that leads them to Christ. They didn't know that because the veil was upon their heart.

They couldn't understand the true meaning of the law given. But whenever their heart turned to the Lord, that veil is taken away. In other words, whenever their heart turned to Christ, then the veil is taken away because they understand fully the meaning of law and also the meaning of grace.

But here you'll find Paul again changes the application of the veil. Well, maybe before that we should mention this. You remember when Christ was crucified on the cross.

At the time when he died, it is finished. The veil in the temple in the city in Jerusalem was rent into two, from top to bottom. In other words, when Christ died on the cross, the veil was torn into two.

Why? In Hebrews chapter 10, we are told that God has opened for us a new and living way, dedicated for us, that we may enter into the holiest of all through the veil which is his flesh. In other words, when the word became flesh and tabernacle among man, Christ in the flesh is the veil. His flesh is the veil.

His flesh is the veil that separates the holiest of all from the holy place. In him is God. The glory of God dwells in him.

And yet because he took upon himself the flesh, therefore the people in the world could not see the glory of God. It was hidden within the flesh. When they saw Jesus, they thought he was a man of Galilee.

They thought he was a carpenter, the son of a carpenter. They thought he was a prophet. They thought he was a teacher from heaven.

They could not see the glory of God. Why? Because it was hidden by his flesh. Only those who have spiritual eyes could see the glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father.

And you'll find in John chapter 1, verse 14, the word became flesh and tabernacle among man, in parenthesis, and we contemplate his glory, even the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. But that's in parenthesis. In other words, only people with spiritual eyes could see, throw that veil, throw that flesh to the glory of God.

But with ordinary people, they couldn't see it. Even though he was full of grace and truth, and yet they couldn't see the glory of God, because it was veiled by his flesh. Only once that veil was lifted for a little time.

That was when he was transformed and transfigured on the Mount of Transfiguration. On the Mount of Transfiguration, the veil was lifted for a little while, and the glory of God just shone forth. But thank God, when our Lord Jesus was crucified, when his flesh was broken on Calvary's cross, the veil in the temple was rent from top to bottom.

So his flesh is the veil. And that veil is already rent. Because that veil is rent, therefore the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ is now visible.

We can behold the glory of the Lord will unveil face, and be transformed from glory to glory according to his image by the Lord the Spirit. This is what Christ has done. Therefore there is no reason why there

should be any more veil.

The veil is rent. But in the same principle, as God put the gospel of Jesus Christ, as God puts Christ, his life and light in us, our flesh again becomes a veil. Our flesh can hinder the coming forth of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Unless this veil is also rent, the gospel will be hidden. But so far as Paul is concerned, this veil is rent. Therefore he said, so far as he is concerned, if the gospel is veiled, it will not be because of him.

It is because of those who do not believe. And dear brothers and sisters, what is the secret of spiritual ministry? The nature of spiritual ministry is the imparting of Christ. Ministering Christ to people.

Writing Christ in the life of people. That is the nature of spiritual ministry. But how? How can we minister Christ? Or to put it in a negative sense, why are we not able to minister Christ to people? What is the reason? And you will find the reason is in that veil.

In that veil. Is the veil rent? If the veil is rent, then the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ will shine forth. If the veil is not rent, then the glory of God is being hidden within us.

And in order to explain this, Paul said, we have the treasure in earthen vessels. Now what is the treasure? Of course we know there is only one treasure. It is Christ.

He is the treasure. And the treasure is precious, is worthy, is radiant, living. Now who are the earthen vessels? Of course we are.

We are made of earth. As earthen vessels we are common, we are cheap, unworthy, fragile, weak, opaque, base, that is, not originally fit for noble purposes. And yet you find the grace of God is such, the gospel is such, that he has put the treasure in earthen vessels.

Now no one would do that. The treasure and the earthen vessels are so, so, so much different. They seem to be on opposite poles.

And yet you find the treasure is not against the earthen vessels, nor the earthen vessels is against the treasure. It is the treasure in the earthen vessels together. Now that's grace.

But as the treasure is in the earthen vessels, the earthen vessel being opaque, the radiancy of the knowledge of Jesus Christ will not be able to shine forth. Why? Because the earthen vessel that contains the treasure will keep the light within it. And that is, the ministry does not come forth.

The potential of ministry is there. It is Christ. Because we preach Christ Jesus Lord, not ourselves.

So in every brother and sister the potential of ministry is there. But, being earthen vessels, we can hinder the ministry coming forth, from coming forth. One thing is needed.

And that is, the earthen vessels must be broken. If the earthen vessel is broken, then the radiancy of the gospel of Jesus Christ will shine forth. The surpassing greatness of His power will be manifested.

Therefore you'll find the secret of spiritual ministry is brokenness. Unless there is brokenness in our lives, unless our flesh is broken, unless our outward man is consumed, ministry will never. Brothers and sisters, that is the reason why you find ministry is very costly.

Do not think that we can minister Christ to the body of Christ. We can minister Christ to our brothers and sisters, without paying a tremendous cost. It costs our life.

It costs the putting to death of our flesh. Our flesh is the veil. And unless that is putting to death, true ministry will not be able to come forth.

Our tendency is, we like to preserve the earthen vessel. We like to keep it intact. Not only that, we like to strengthen it, reinforce it, beautify it.

We like to feel that we are strong. We are able. We are spiritual.

We can do it. Even in the service of God, you'll find this is our natural tendency. If we do not love God, if we have no desire to serve Him, then we do nothing.

But if we do love Him, and we do want to serve Him, but how? Instead of seeing that our earthen vessel must be broken, we use all that is. Inherent in that earthen vessel. Self-glory, all these things.

We take hold of ourselves, and try to serve God with the power of the earthen vessel. And sometimes we feel that the power of the earthen vessel is too small, so we ask God to give us power. Sometimes we feel we are insufficient, we ask Him to help us.

We ask Him to build us up. The more we serve, the stronger we are, more reinforced we are. But dear brothers and sisters, it is the earthen vessel that is being expressed.

The light within is still hidden. We are imparting ourselves. We are not imparting Christ.

We are preaching ourselves. We are not preaching Jesus Christ Lord. What people receive is us, not Christ.

This is not ministry. But it is our natural tendency. We always want God to strengthen us, to build us up, that we may serve Him.

But you know who is being served. Not God. You are being served.

The secret to spiritual ministry is, the earthen vessel must be broken. Not to be strengthened, but to be broken. The veil must be rent.

But how is the veil rent? You know the veil that is between the holiest of all and the holy place is, was a very heavy veil. Some people say you may take two oxen, strong oxen, and pull in different direction. You cannot pull that veil.

It was very heavy, very thick. And remember, when it was rent, it was not rent from bottom to top. It was rent from top to bottom.

In other words, no man could rent it. It is God who rent it. Dear brothers and sisters, how can this earthen vessel be broken? How can the veil that is our flesh be rent? Nobody can do it and nobody will do it.

And please don't try to do it. Because you cannot. You cannot.

It has to be rent from top to bottom. In other words, God will do it. But before God can do it, there is one thing we must do.

Not trying to rent yourself. You love yourself so much. You will not do it.

But one thing we must do, and that is, we must tell Him, Lord, for the sake of Your ministry, I am willing to be broken. For the sake that Your life may be in others, I am willing to die. For the sake of Jesus, I am willing to bear in my body the dying of Jesus.

That the life of Jesus may be manifested. In other words, we need to be willing. We need to offer ourselves to Him and say, Lord, here am I. I am not going to preach myself.

I am going to preach Jesus Christ, Lord. I am not going to minister myself to people. I am going to minister Christ to people.

And for the sake of that ministry, I am willing to be broken. I am willing to be rent. I am willing to die.

Lord, I am in Your hand. Do it for Your sake. And that is all we can do.

And that is all we are required to do. And as we yield our life to Him for this purpose, you'll find the Holy Spirit will arrange our circumstances and environments to break us. Here you'll find, Paul says, every way afflicted but not strengthened.

There is another translation which says, sorely pressed but not hammed in. Another translation said, handicapped on all sides but not frustrated. Think of that.

In order that the ministry may come forth and where the willingness is there, the Holy Spirit will soar and arrange your environment. We call it the discipline of the Holy Spirit. He will so arrange your environment to sorely press you.

You know when you are pressed a little bit, you can withstand. But when you are pressed beyond your measure, then you break. Sorely pressed but not hammed in.

Handicapped on all sides but not frustrated. Why? Because there is resurrection. Seeing no apparent issue but our way not entirely shut up.

And there is another translation which says, at our wit's end but not at our hope's end. So far as our wit is concerned, we are at the end. We don't know what to do now.

Now brothers and sisters, do not think that you come to your wit's end so quickly. Often times you find it takes years to come to your wit's end. Because you are so witty.

It takes Jacob twenty years to come to his wit's end. But that's not the hope's end. Because it is the beginning of hope.

Persecuted but not abandoned. Yes persecuted. By man but not abandoned by God.

Hands down but not destroyed. And I like the other translation. Knocked down but not knocked out.

Now brothers and sisters, you know often times we are knocked down. Well, knowing our strength, it really is not easy to knock us down. But sometimes we are knocked down, but we bounce back.

We are never knocked out. Always bearing in our body the dying of Jesus. Now what is the dying of Jesus? The word there is not the death of Jesus.

It is the dying of Jesus or the slaying of Jesus. Now what does that mean? It means the putting to death of Jesus. Or in some translations it is the deadening of Jesus.

In other words, the death of Jesus is so powerful that the death of Jesus is being applied to our body. Applied to our flesh. And when the death of Jesus is applied to our flesh, it puts the flesh to death.

It slays us. It slays us. Always bearing in the body the slaying of Jesus.

And I will underline that word always. Not just once in a great while, but always. Paul said, I die daily.

Daily. Oh brothers and sisters, do we have such experience? If we are lacking in such experience, no wonder ministry is being hindered. How can ministry come forth from the earthen vessels if the earthen vessels are not broken? We are still what we are.

Dear brothers and sisters, oftentimes you find people after many years of services, they are only getting stronger and stronger instead of weaker and weaker. Is there brokenness in our life? Are we always bearing the dying of Jesus in our body? That the life of Jesus may be manifested. Are we being delivered to death for the sake of Jesus? You know, this is different from Romans chapter 8. In Romans chapter 8, you find Paul says in verse 13, But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you shall live.

Now in Romans chapter 8, you find it is in the area of sin. How can we be delivered from the power of sin? We are delivered from the power of sin on the one hand, knowing that our old man was crucified with Christ. On the other hand, by putting to death the deeds of the body by the Spirit.

In other words, whenever sin wants to raise its head through our body, the Holy Spirit immediately will remind us that our old man was crucified. And by the power of the Holy Spirit, we deliver the deeds of the body to death. And that is to say, we have nothing to do with sin.

So in Romans chapter 8, it tells us the secret of being delivered from the power of sin. And it relates to spiritual life. How can we live that ye shall live? How can we live our spiritual life? How can we live an overcoming life? How can we live a life that will glorify God? We have to put to death the deeds of the body by the power of the Holy Spirit.

But in 2 Corinthians chapter 4, this deliver to death for the sake of Jesus is not concerned with sin. Basically. It is concerned with the flesh.

It is not basically in the area of spiritual life. It is basically in the area of spiritual ministry. Now of course, life and ministry can never be completely separated, that's true.

But the emphasis here is putting to death the flesh. The dying of Jesus, the slaying of Jesus is in the area of the flesh. So that the veil may be rent and the glory of God in the holiest place may shine forth.

Brothers and sisters, this may explain why. Sometimes in your life you find there are situations that you cannot explain. It has nothing to do with sin.

And as you wait upon the Lord, so far as your individual life is concerned, you do not understand why these things are necessary. They do not seem to be necessary so far as your life is concerned. But brothers and sisters, if you know the heart of God, if you know that God has called you to minister Christ, then it explains.

It is for the sake of Jesus. It is not for your sake. It is for the sake of Jesus.

That the life of Christ may be manifested in other people. Are we willing to be broken? You remember the story of Gideon and the 300. How they hold in one hand a picture with torch, hidden in it.

And on the other hand, oh, a trumpet. As they come to the enemy's camp, they broke the pictures. So the torch, the light might shine.

And they blew the trumpet. And you know, a great victory was won. You remember the story of how our Lord Jesus used five loaves and two fishes to feed 5,000.

How? The five loaves and two fishes must be given to the Lord. Out of your hand, into the hand of the blessed Lord. He will bless them.

And He will break them. And He will multiply and distribute them. This is the secret of ministry.

And again, I will re-emphasize that ministry here. We are not talking about the special ministry. We are talking about body ministry.

Everybody is involved in this ministry. And the nature of this ministry must be imparting Christ. And the secret of this ministry is in brokenness.

The strange thing is this. As we are broken, remember, it doesn't mean that we are destroyed or annihilated. God never destroy or annihilate our personality.

It is true that our flesh must be broken. Our outward man. Our flesh is our outward man.

It has to be consumed. And it will be consumed. When we are put into situations like what we just described.

Knock down but not knock out. It has to be consumed. But our inward man is renewed day by day.

In other words, in the process of being broken. We are not destroyed. We are completed.

We are completed. We are beautified. The inward man, the man of the spirit is being built up, renewed day by day.

Of course, it takes faith. Why? Because without faith, we will always look at things seen. And if you look at things seen, you will be disturbed.

But we look at the things that are unseen. Because we know that the things that are seen are temporary. But the things that are unseen are eternal.

Even though there will be afflictions involved. Affliction to our soul. Like iron entering into our soul.

Joseph, you remember. Iron has entered into his soul. And yet, Paul said, this is just a momentary and light affliction.

It works for us in surpassing measure an eternal weight of glory. Dear brothers and sisters, it's worth it. I do look to the Lord that this body ministry may be manifested.

It is my prayer that every brother, every sister, every member in the body of Christ should have a part in this ministry of the body. But again, we find that this is not so. It is not because it is not there.

Yes, on the one hand, the spiritual life of God's people, does not grow as it should. And because spiritual life does not grow, ministry is not able to be produced. That's true.

How we need to grow in spiritual life. But on the other hand, I believe there are ministries already there. God has already shown into our hearts.

We have Christ in us. We have his life. His light in us.

We ought to be able to minister Christ to one another. To build up one another. We ought to be able to.

But why we cannot? It is because we love ourselves too much. We give into our flesh. We build up our flesh.

We strengthen our flesh. And the result is, all our services are just preaching ourselves. Not preaching Jesus Christ, Lord.

Oh, how we need to be broken. How we need to see that veil that Christ may pull forth. Oh, I remember the story of Mary.

How she came to the Lord. She broke the alabaster flesh. That a pound of pure lard might pull forth upon the Lord.

And the fragrance filled the house. This is the way we should do. Because he is worthy.

Shall we pray? Our Heavenly Father, we do praise and thank thee because thou has already shown into our hearts. We have seen the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. We have this treasure in our earthen vessels.

Oh, how we desire that. It may not be ourselves, but it may be Christ that is ministered. Lord, we offer ourselves to thee afresh.

We confess that we cannot, we will not, we are not able to rent ourselves. But Lord, for thy sake, for the sake of thy body, for the sake of the ministry, we are willing to put ourselves in thy hands. And ask thee, oh Lord, that thou will bless us, thou will break us, and thou will distribute us.

We do desire to see the body of Christ build up. Lord, do not allow any one of us here be passive. But Lord, that we may all function under the headship of Christ.

That we may build up ourselves in love. We ask in the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/1/SID1733.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/stephen-kaung/secret-of-spiritual-ministry/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net